neath, and marked, as in others of the genus, with strong parallel veins. The flowers, which are very small, grow in heads or sessile umbels, upon peduncles an inch or more in length. At the base of each bunch is the large spreading involucrum, constituting the chief beauty of the tree when in flower. This involucrum is composed of four white, nerved, obovate leaves, having their point turned abruptly down or up, so as to give them an obcordate appearance. This point has frequently a reddish tinge. Calyx superior, somewhat bell-shaped, ending in four obtuse spreading teeth. Petals four, oblong, obtuse, reflexed. Stamens four, erect, the anthers oblong with the filaments inserted in their middle. Style erect, shorter than the stamens, with an obtuse stigma. The fruit is an oval drupe of a glossy scarlet colour, containing a nucleus with two cells and two seeds.

The bark of the Cornus florida is a powerful bitter, possessing also an astringent and somewhat aromatic taste. Both tannin and the gallic acid are abundantly developed in its solutions by their proper tests. In my experiments with the bark of young twigs, but a small quantity of pure resin was made manifest. It would seem that the principal seat of the bitterness is in a variety of extractive matter.

In a valuable inaugural dissertation on the Cornus florida and Cornus sericea by Dr. Walker of Virginia, much attention appears to have been bestowed on the chemical properties of their bark. He found that water distilled from the bark in powder had a transparent, whitish appearance, with a slight aromatic odour, and no perceptible taste. When the heat was increased, the fluid had a lemon colour, with an unpleasant smell and an acerb taste. These effects were probably produced by the volatilization and partial decomposition of portions of the bark in consequence of the heat being continued until the mixture was evaporated nearly to dryness.

With a view to ascertain the effect of different menstrua, Dr. Walker subjected to experiment the residual mass furnished by evaporating a decoction of the root of Cornus florida. Two drachms of this residuum, which had been furnished by seven and an half ounces of the decoction, were macerated in successive quantities of the best alcohol, until the last portion ceased to be changed in colour and taste. The part, which remained undissolved, weighed only half a drachm. When redissolved it was destitute of taste, and underwent no change of colour on adding the test of iron. The alcohol, which had been employed in the ex-

JACOB BIGELOW *American Medical Botany* BOSTON, 1817-1820 CARY GRAPHIC ARTS COLLECTION, ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY Octavo